

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method for removing from a microelectronic device structure a noble metal residue including at least one metal selected from the group consisting of platinum, palladium, iridium and rhodium, by contacting the microelectronic device structure with a cleaning gas including a reactive halide composition, e.g., XeF_2 , SF_6 , SiF_4 , Si_2F_6 or SiF_3 and SiF_2 radicals. The method may be carried out in a batch-cleaning mode, in which fresh charges of cleaning gas are successively introduced to a chamber containing the residue-bearing microelectronic device structure. Each charge is purged from the chamber after reaction with the residue, and the charging/purging is continued until the residue has been at least partially removed to a desired extent. Alternatively, the cleaning gas may be continuously flowed through the chamber containing the microelectronic device structure, until the noble metal residue has been sufficiently removed.

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